

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-20 (Cancelled)

Claim 21 (Currently Amended) A roll stand comprising:

- (a) a pair of work rolls for rolling a metal strip;
- (b) back up rolls allocated to and providing lateral support for the work rolls;
- (c) support beams each of which supports one of the back up rolls;
- (d) a plurality of force generation devices arranged along said back up rolls, said force generation devices acting on said support beams, each of said force generation devices being individually adjustable in such way as to provide an adjustable whipping of its respective back up roll ~~[[or]]~~ and work roll via its support beam, wherein said back up rolls, said support beams and said plurality of force generation devices are aligned with each other so as to exert forces on said work rolls in line with said force generation devices;
- (e) a chock with support or intermediate rolls, said chock being slidable into and out of the roll stand along a longitudinal direction of said chock, each support or intermediate roll being associated with and supporting one of said work rolls along a direction which is essentially perpendicular to a movement direction of a metal strip passing through the roll stand;
- (f) said force generation devices positioning said back up rolls from an idle position in which said back up rolls are located outside a region where the chock moves during slide-in or withdrawal, to an operating position in which the back up rolls press against the work rolls.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 21, wherein the force generation devices are hydraulically or pneumatically operable actuating cylinders.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 21, wherein the force generation devices are mechanically adjustable spindles.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 21, further comprising a bearing arrangement in which the back-up rolls are supported, at least in certain sections along their longitudinal extensions, by the support beam.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 24, wherein the bearing arrangement comprises at least one hydrostatic bearing.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 24, wherein the bearing arrangement comprises roller bearing which are arranged so as to be regularly spaced apart along the back-up rolls.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 21, wherein the support beams comprise first and second detachably interconnected components aligned in a longitudinal direction of the back-up rolls, the first component bearing against the back-up roll and the second component being coupled to the force generation device associated with the back-up rolls.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) The roll stand according to claim 27, wherein the first component is connected to the second component of the support beam so as to be slidable along a longitudinal direction of said first component.